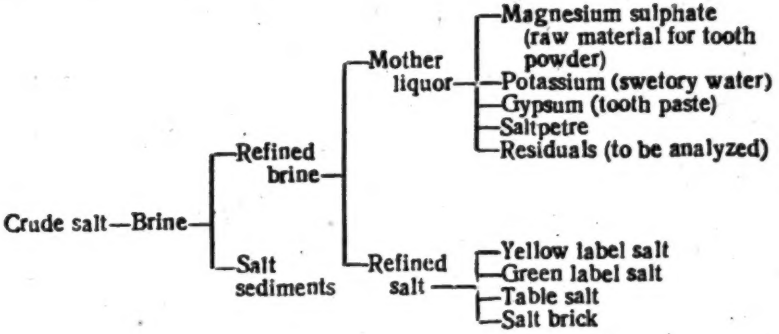
8: Lin E-5 (1927)1928 AF12 North China AF12

381
258 The Manufacturing Process.—The process of refining salt is rather a simple one. First, lumps of crude salt are dissolved in a ten-foot deep tank. The brine water in the tank is then filtered through sand and let flow into another tank containing a little lime so that iron compounds will be precipitated. It is next pumped into a high tower and then from the tower into a rectangular iron vat and is heated until it reaches 109° C. As the water gradually evaporates, white crystals of salt are formed. The mother liquor is then drained off through filtration. The crystals are then spread and dried on a huge *kang*[1] heated underneath, and ground into fine powder by means of a stone roller. After going through an electric sieve, the refined salt is then ready to be put into bags and sent to the market for sale.

The mother liquor which has been left over from salt-making contains many chemical compounds from which can be extracted saltpetre, magnesium-sulphate, gypsum and potassium. By mixing them with other ingredients, swetory water, tooth paste, tooth powder, magnesium carbonate and other articles are produced. The different processes of manufacturing salt will be made clear by the following diagram:—



381
317
258 The Production of Refined Salt.—The supply of crude salt in the two sections of the factory is drawn from two different sources. The east section which consists of two shops depends on the six salt fields of its own to supply the raw material. The

---

1 An oblong block of brick masonry.

8: Lin E-5 (1927)1928 AF12 North China AF12

west section which consists of four shops has to buy crude salt from Hanku, Shin-ho and Tangku. Tangku, which lies in the Chiang-Lu salt monopoly district, has always been rich in salt production. With such conveniences as easily accessible water and railway communications, supply of raw material and transportation of manufactured goods at Tangku have been greatly facilitated. If the demand for refined salt is constantly increasing, the factory can easily work to the fullest capacity of its six shops. But unfortunately unstable and chaotic conditions which China has undergone in recent years have rendered the factory difficult, if not entirely impossible, of operation, not to say money-making.

The output of the two sections of the factory varies somewhat in amount and also from day to day. Because of the varying degrees of efficiency among the workers, due undoubtedly to a number of causes, no definite amount of production could be ascertained. But it has been fixed by the factory authorities that each vat should turn out from 120 to 180 bags per day, one bag weighing 150 kilograms. And according to the report of the chief of the managerial department, the maximum daily output has been 1,200 bags in the four shops in the west section and 800 bags in the two shops in the east section of the factory. The total output of these six shops, therefore, amounts to about 3,000 piculs[1] per day or about 1,080,000 piculs per year. On account of the unsettled conditions in the country which have resulted in frequent suspension of the work in the factory, the average amount of output has been reduced to 600,000 piculs a year. The sale of these 600,000 piculs of refined salt is left to the business department of the Company at Tientsin.

It may be recalled that the salt revenue of the Chinese government has been pledged as security for the Reorganization Loan of 1913, and the transportation and sale of salt has since then been put under the supervision of the Salt Inspectorate. Consequently, the amount of crude and refined salt bought and

[1] One picul is equivalent to 100 kilograms.